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The National Citizen Survey™

CITY OF ASHEVILLE, NC
2008

Report of Demographic Subgroup Comparisons

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SURVEY BACKGROUND

ABOUT THE NATIONAL CITIZEN SURVEY™

The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS™) is a collaborative effort between National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA).

The survey and its administration are standardized to assure high quality survey methods and comparable results across The National Citizen Survey™ jurisdictions. Participating households are selected at random and the household member who responds is selected without bias. Multiple mailings give each household more than one chance to participate with self-addressed and postage paid envelopes. Results are statistically weighted to reflect the proper demographic composition of the entire community.

The National Citizen Survey™ customized for this jurisdiction was developed in close cooperation with local jurisdiction staff. The City of Asheville staff selected items from a menu of questions about services and community problems; they defined the jurisdiction boundaries NRC used for sampling; and they provided the appropriate letterhead and signatures for mailings. City of Asheville staff also determined local interest in a variety of add-on options to The National Citizen Survey™ Basic Service.

One of the add-on options that Asheville chose was to have crosstabulations of evaluative questions 1-18c by demographic questions d3 (length of residency in Asheville), d5 (rent or own home), d9 (annual household income of respondent), and d12 (age of respondent).

UNDERSTANDING THE RESULTS

"DON'T KNOW" RESPONSES

On many of the questions in the survey respondents may answer "don't know." The proportion of respondents giving this reply is shown in the full set of responses included in Appendix A. However, these responses have been removed from the analyses presented in the body of the report. In other words, the tables and graphs display the responses from respondents who had an opinion about a specific item.

UNDERSTANDING THE TABLES

In this report, comparisons between demographic subgroups are shown. For most of the questions, we have shown only one number for each question. We have summarized responses to show only the proportion of respondents giving a certain answer; for example, the percent of respondents who rated the quality of life as "excellent" or "good", or the percent of respondents who felt the rate of growth was "about right."

ANOVA and chi-square tests of significance were applied to these comparisons of survey questions by demographic subgroups. A "p-value" of 0.05 or less indicates that there is less than a 5% probability that differences observed between subgroups are due to chance; or in other words, a greater than 95% probability that the differences observed are "real." Where differences were statistically significant, they are marked in gray.

COMPARISONS

Cells shaded grey indicate statistically significant differences between subgroups.

Question 1: Quality of Life (Percent "excellent" or "good")										
Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Asheville:	Length of residency in Asheville			Rent or own home			Annual household income			Age
	Less than 5 years	6 to 20 years	More than 20 years	Rent	Own	Less than \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 or more	18-34	
	83%	90%	79%	80%	93%	77%	88%	89%	86%	82%
Asheville as a place to live	75%	82%	82%	70%	90%	69%	82%	87%	74%	76%
Your neighborhood as a place to live	76%	70%	69%	63%	80%	57%	75%	78%	74%	64%
Asheville as a place to raise children	39%	25%	40%	29%	40%	27%	37%	42%	29%	28%
Asheville as a place to work	81%	74%	72%	68%	81%	59%	80%	83%	82%	68%
Asheville as a place to retire	83%	82%	77%	76%	86%	70%	85%	85%	81%	77%
The overall quality of life in Asheville										84%

Question 2: Community Characteristics (Percent "excellent" or "good")											
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Asheville as a whole:	Length of residency in Asheville			Rent or own home			Annual household income			Age	
	Less than 5 years	6 to 20 years	More than 20 years	Rent	Own	Less than \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 or more	18-34	35-54	55 +
Sense of community	77%	74%	60%	68%	69%	64%	76%	69%	72%	66%	71%
Openness and acceptance of the community towards people of diverse backgrounds	76%	81%	66%	71%	77%	68%	70%	84%	72%	77%	71%
Overall appearance of Asheville	67%	74%	63%	64%	71%	64%	72%	69%	68%	67%	69%
Cleanliness of Asheville	63%	59%	51%	56%	58%	53%	64%	54%	60%	59%	52%
Overall quality of new development in Asheville	42%	30%	44%	35%	44%	35%	40%	42%	41%	40%	38%
Variety of housing options	32%	25%	28%	26%	30%	27%	28%	30%	29%	31%	26%
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Asheville	77%	63%	63%	61%	74%	57%	70%	74%	65%	63%	73%
Shopping opportunities	76%	73%	73%	72%	76%	74%	79%	69%	75%	69%	78%
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	86%	83%	71%	80%	80%	70%	86%	83%	87%	73%	80%
Recreational opportunities	86%	73%	61%	73%	73%	66%	74%	78%	81%	67%	70%
Employment opportunities	19%	9%	17%	15%	15%	18%	14%	12%	15%	12%	18%
Educational opportunities	71%	67%	71%	68%	71%	70%	73%	67%	67%	67%	75%
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	88%	81%	65%	78%	77%	68%	83%	81%	86%	73%	74%
Opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities	84%	86%	79%	80%	86%	74%	83%	91%	87%	77%	84%
Opportunities to volunteer	84%	91%	86%	80%	93%	74%	90%	94%	89%	85%	87%
Opportunities to participate in community matters	71%	74%	61%	63%	73%	48%	72%	80%	72%	64%	69%
Ease of car travel in Asheville	52%	60%	49%	50%	56%	48%	54%	57%	59%	49%	53%
Ease of bus travel in Asheville	30%	38%	40%	41%	30%	48%	28%	31%	33%	44%	33%
Ease of bicycle travel in Asheville	22%	11%	32%	24%	21%	30%	22%	16%	17%	26%	26%
Ease of walking in Asheville	47%	37%	39%	45%	35%	43%	42%	36%	45%	41%	39%
Availability of paths and walking trails	37%	32%	34%	35%	34%	35%	33%	34%	41%	30%	31%
Traffic flow on major streets	31%	29%	23%	26%	29%	24%	26%	34%	28%	30%	24%

Question 2: Community Characteristics (Percent "excellent" or "good")										
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Asheville as a whole:	Length of residency in Asheville			Rent or own home			Annual household income			Age
	Less than 5 years	6 to 20 years	More than 20 years	Rent	Own	Less than \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 or more	18-34	
	23%	15%	17%	17%	21%	17%	17%	21%	21%	
Amount of public parking	10%	8%	16%	10%	13%	14%	8%	12%	12%	19%
Availability of affordable quality housing	45%	29%	44%	37%	41%	45%	39%	33%	34%	16%
Air quality	71%	75%	58%	64%	72%	57%	71%	73%	71%	11%
Quality of overall natural environment in Asheville	87%	85%	65%	72%	84%	62%	81%	89%	81%	42%
Overall image or reputation of Asheville										42%

Question 3: Growth (Percent "too fast")											
Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Asheville over the past 2 years:	Length of residency in Asheville		Rent or own home		Annual household income		Age				
	Less than 5 years	6 to 20 years	More than 20 years	Rent	Own	Less than \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 or more	18-34	35-54	55+
Population growth	58%	76%	73%	70%	71%	77%	77%	57%	62%	69%	76%
Retail growth (stores, restaurants, etc.)	40%	43%	44%	43%	42%	46%	48%	36%	39%	43%	44%
Jobs growth	3%	0%	2%	2%	2%	3%	1%	1%	3%	0%	3%

Question 4: Code Enforcement (Percent at least a "minor" problem)											
To what degree, if at all, are run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles a problem in Asheville?	Length of residency in Asheville		Rent or own home		Annual household income		Age				
	Less than 5 years	6 to 20 years	More than 20 years	Rent	Own	Less than \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 or more	18-34	35-54	55+
	89%	88%	92%	87%	92%	91%	91%	88%	89%	83%	90%

Question 5: Community Safety (Percent "very" or "somewhat" safe)											
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel from the following in Asheville:	Length of residency in Asheville			Rent or own home		Annual household income			Age		
	Less than 5 years	6 to 20 years	More than 20 years	Rent	Own	Less than \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 or more			
Violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	68%	68%	53%	60%	67%	49%	61%	76%	68%	65%	55%
Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	57%	58%	47%	51%	58%	46%	50%	64%	57%	54%	49%
Environmental hazards, including toxic waste	63%	65%	56%	57%	68%	50%	60%	72%	57%	66%	59%

Question 6: Personal Safety (Percent "very" or "somewhat" safe)											
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel:	Length of residency in Asheville			Rent or own home		Annual household income			Age		
	Less than 5 years	6 to 20 years	More than 20 years	Rent	Own	Less than \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 or more			
In your neighborhood during the day	94%	97%	91%	92%	96%	84%	98%	98%	94%	90%	97%
In your neighborhood after dark	74%	78%	69%	66%	83%	57%	75%	87%	71%	71%	78%
In Asheville's downtown area during the day	85%	90%	71%	79%	86%	73%	83%	88%	84%	82%	78%
In Asheville's downtown area after dark	49%	52%	33%	37%	52%	31%	44%	54%	44%	48%	39%

Questions 7 and 8: Crime Victimization and Reporting (Percent "yes")						
	Length of residency in Asheville		Rent or own home	Annual household income		Age
	Less than 5 years	6 to 20 years	Rent	Less than \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 or more
During the past twelve months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?	24%	19%	22%	27%	15%	32%
If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?	73%	56%	94%	79%	73%	86%
					19%	16%
					57%	90%
					90%	80%
					81%	81%
					56%	56%

Question 9: Resident Behaviors (Percent at least once in past 12 months)

In the last 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members participated in the following activities in Asheville?	Length of residency in Asheville			Rent or own home			Annual household income			Age		
	Less than 5 years	6 to 20 years	More than 20 years	Rent	Own	Less than \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 or more	18-34	35-54	55+	
Used Asheville recreation centers	59%	46%	54%	52%	56%	47%	52%	61%	60%	53%	48%	
Participated in a recreation program or activity	52%	44%	39%	41%	52%	36%	42%	56%	50%	46%	39%	
Visited a neighborhood park or City park	88%	85%	74%	84%	81%	69%	85%	89%	89%	89%	69%	
Ridden a local bus within Asheville	28%	26%	31%	36%	18%	42%	25%	20%	32%	27%	27%	
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	21%	33%	35%	21%	43%	20%	30%	38%	19%	33%	37%	
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television	43%	59%	70%	48%	71%	45%	61%	65%	39%	60%	73%	
Visited the City of Asheville Web site (at www.ashevillenc.gov)	72%	63%	56%	61%	69%	49%	68%	74%	78%	62%	51%	
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	82%	87%	82%	77%	92%	68%	86%	95%	83%	83%	85%	
Volunteered your time to some group or activity in Asheville	59%	72%	60%	56%	74%	49%	63%	75%	60%	65%	64%	
Participated in religious or spiritual activities in Asheville	46%	67%	72%	53%	73%	43%	68%	73%	48%	69%	68%	
Participated in a club or civic group in Asheville	25%	51%	45%	30%	54%	28%	41%	47%	31%	43%	46%	
Provided help to a friend or neighbor	93%	100%	96%	95%	98%	94%	97%	98%	97%	98%	94%	

Question 10: Neighborliness (Percent at least once per month)											
	Length of residency in Asheville		Rent or own home		Annual household income		Age				
	Less than 5 years	6 to 20 years	More than 20 years	Rent	Own	Less than \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 or more	18-34	35-54	55+
About how often, if at all, do you talk to or visit with your immediate neighbors (people who live in the 10 or 20 households that are closest to you)?	91%	93%	82%	87%	89%	82%	87%	94%	92%	88%	86%

Question 11: Service Quality (Percent "excellent" or "good")											
	Length of residency in Asheville			Rent or own home			Annual household income			Age	
	Less than 5 years	6 to 20 years	More than 20 years	Rent	Own	Less than \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 or more	18-34	35-54	55+
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Asheville:											
Police services	68%	69%	69%	62%	77%	60%	74%	69%	55%	69%	79%
Fire services	91%	95%	94%	92%	95%	88%	99%	94%	86%	96%	96%
Ambulance or emergency medical services	86%	89%	91%	87%	91%	85%	93%	88%	78%	90%	95%
Crime prevention	56%	55%	40%	42%	58%	37%	54%	56%	43%	52%	51%
Fire prevention and education	75%	68%	70%	66%	75%	58%	80%	75%	55%	74%	75%
Traffic enforcement	62%	53%	58%	57%	57%	50%	58%	63%	53%	64%	55%
Street repair	29%	30%	22%	23%	31%	22%	33%	24%	25%	29%	25%
Street cleaning	63%	50%	42%	51%	52%	50%	51%	53%	60%	55%	39%
Street lighting	52%	60%	55%	50%	63%	43%	63%	60%	49%	60%	57%
Snow removal	62%	55%	57%	53%	64%	53%	57%	64%	55%	63%	55%
Sidewalk maintenance	47%	36%	40%	41%	42%	43%	41%	40%	44%	47%	33%
Traffic signal timing	37%	29%	42%	36%	36%	39%	34%	35%	39%	30%	41%
Bus or transit services	41%	40%	52%	46%	44%	59%	35%	40%	40%	47%	49%
Garbage collection	81%	82%	81%	80%	84%	78%	87%	79%	73%	80%	90%
Recycling	63%	71%	78%	61%	84%	64%	74%	75%	59%	72%	81%
Yard waste pick-up	59%	72%	68%	60%	73%	61%	74%	69%	61%	70%	69%
Storm drainage	40%	62%	51%	46%	56%	54%	57%	47%	45%	58%	50%
Drinking water	54%	56%	73%	54%	72%	52%	65%	71%	57%	73%	73%
City parks	73%	78%	72%	72%	76%	69%	76%	77%	78%	74%	70%
Recreation programs or classes	70%	74%	65%	66%	74%	65%	69%	72%	70%	66%	71%
Recreation centers or facilities	77%	67%	57%	68%	65%	56%	67%	74%	73%	64%	60%
Land use, planning and zoning	23%	8%	17%	19%	13%	20%	21%	10%	22%	10%	17%
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc)	35%	28%	24%	28%	29%	28%	30%	29%	40%	25%	23%
Animal control	62%	48%	47%	52%	51%	49%	48%	57%	61%	46%	50%
Economic development	41%	28%	32%	32%	35%	29%	35%	36%	40%	33%	28%

Question 11: Service Quality (Percent "excellent" or "good")										
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Asheville:	Length of residency in Asheville			Rent or own home			Annual household income			Age
	Less than 5 years	6 to 20 years	More than 20 years	Rent	Own	\$24,999	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 or more	18-34	
	52%	50%	47%	41%	56%	42%	48%	57%	36%	50%
Services to seniors	48%	41%	40%	37%	47%	43%	42%	40%	36%	41%
Services to youth	45%	23%	30%	30%	37%	31%	32%	35%	33%	29%
Services to low-income people	60%	50%	43%	44%	59%	42%	46%	63%	51%	54%
Public library services	67%	57%	61%	57%	67%	59%	61%	65%	60%	59%
Public schools										64%
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	40%	40%	43%	36%	47%	30%	42%	53%	32%	43%
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	33%	31%	25%	31%	27%	27%	33%	30%	29%	35%
										47%

Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following?	Question 12: Government Services Overall (Percent "excellent" or "good")										
	Length of residency in Asheville			Rent or own home		Annual household income			Age		
	Less than 5 years	6 to 20 years	More than 20 years	Rent	Own	Less than \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 or more	18-34	35-54	55+
The City of Asheville	64%	69%	59%	60%	67%	60%	64%	66%	65%	58%	67%
The Federal Government	32%	36%	40%	31%	43%	27%	45%	36%	33%	35%	40%
The State Government	41%	38%	40%	37%	43%	35%	42%	41%	41%	40%	39%
Buncombe County Government	55%	59%	47%	52%	54%	48%	57%	53%	59%	51%	51%

Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Asheville within the last 12 months (including police, receptionists, planners or any others)?	Question 13: Contact with City Employees (Percent "yes")										
	Length of residency in Asheville			Rent or own home		Annual household income			Age		
	Less than 5 years	6 to 20 years	More than 20 years	Rent	Own	Less than \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 or more	18-34	35-54	55+
57%	60%	62%	57%	66%	60%	63%	59%	64%	64%	53%	

Question 14: City Employees (Percent "excellent" or "good")											
What was your impression of the employee(s) of the City of Asheville in your most recent contact?	Length of residency in Asheville			Rent or own home		Annual household income			Age		
	Less than 5 years	6 to 20 years	More than 20 years	Rent	Own	Less than \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 or more			
Knowledge	85%	74%	73%	77%	76%	76%	73%	80%	79%	69%	82%
Responsiveness	92%	68%	70%	77%	75%	77%	74%	76%	83%	69%	78%
Courtesy	85%	68%	82%	75%	83%	77%	79%	79%	82%	72%	84%
Overall impression	89%	68%	71%	74%	77%	71%	77%	77%	78%	67%	83%

Question 15: Government Performance (Percent "excellent" or "good")											
Please rate the following categories of Asheville government performance:	Length of residency in Asheville			Rent or own home		Annual household income			Age		
	Less than 5 years	6 to 20 years	More than 20 years	Rent	Own	Less than \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 or more			
The value of services for the taxes paid to Asheville	47%	40%	33%	35%	42%	29%	45%	42%	37%	41%	39%
The overall direction that Asheville is taking	39%	36%	25%	31%	33%	27%	37%	33%	34%	33%	31%
The job Asheville government does at welcoming citizen involvement	48%	51%	42%	42%	52%	42%	51%	48%	48%	44%	48%
The job Asheville government does at listening to citizens	23%	34%	26%	20%	36%	19%	33%	31%	24%	29%	29%

Question 16: Recommendation and Longevity (Percent "somewhat" or "very" likely)											
Please indicate how likely or unlikely you are to do each of the following:	Length of residency in Asheville			Rent or own home		Annual household income			Age		
	Less than 5 years	6 to 20 years	More than 20 years	Rent	Own	Less than \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 or more	18-34	35-54	55+
Recommend living in Asheville to someone who asks	78%	82%	69%	69%	84%	65%	78%	83%	79%	70%	80%
Remain in Asheville for the next five years	84%	87%	84%	78%	93%	80%	87%	86%	79%	80%	95%

Question 17: Impact of the Economy (Percent "somewhat" or "very" positive)										
What impact, if any, do you think the economy will have on your family income in the next 6 months? Do you think the impact will be:	Length of residency in Asheville			Rent or own home		Annual household income			Age	
	Less than 5 years	6 to 20 years	More than 20 years	Rent	Own	Less than \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 or more	18-34	35-54

Question 18a: Policy Question 1 (Percent "very important" or "essential")										
Please rate how important, if at all, you think each of the following investments is for the City of Asheville:	Length of residency in Asheville			Rent or own home			Annual household income			Age
	Less than 5 years	6 to 20 years	More than 20 years	Rent	Own	Less than \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 or more	18-34	
Improving roads	56%	65%	80%	66%	71%	69%	64%	70%	55%	70%
Recreation centers and youth programs	70%	65%	69%	74%	60%	67%	67%	71%	67%	64%
Maintenance of public buildings	51%	52%	65%	59%	54%	60%	54%	55%	55%	69%
Public safety including police, fire and emergency preparedness	84%	86%	90%	87%	87%	84%	91%	86%	81%	85%
Environmental protection and renewable energy	91%	85%	77%	88%	78%	84%	86%	81%	89%	79%
Sidewalks and greenways	84%	84%	68%	83%	71%	76%	82%	76%	85%	72%
										78%

Question 18b: Policy Question 2 (Percent "somewhat" or "strongly support")										Age	
To what degree would you support or oppose each of the following capital improvements funded with a property tax increase?	Length of residency in Asheville			Rent or own home			Annual household income				
	Less than 5 years	6 to 20 years	More than 20 years	Rent	Own	Less than \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 or more	18-34	35-54	55+
Affordable housing development	79%	80%	71%	87%	61%	88%	76%	79%	65%	82%	68%
Construction of new sidewalks and greenways	91%	82%	71%	88%	71%	86%	79%	77%	77%	91%	73%
Maintenance/renovation of existing public buildings (i.e. Asheville Civic Center, City Hall, Fire Stations, Police Substations, etc.)	77%	64%	69%	73%	66%	66%	68%	74%	63%	65%	81%
Public transportation	89%	84%	73%	86%	75%	88%	81%	77%	84%	73%	88%
Renovation of existing recreation facilities (i.e., Community Centers)	78%	66%	65%	76%	60%	72%	68%	66%	68%	62%	78%
Roadway improvements	81%	70%	80%	82%	71%	82%	72%	76%	77%	71%	83%

Question 18c: Policy Question 3 (Percent "very important" or "essential")											
Asheville is creating a new Downtown Master Plan. When you're thinking about Downtown Asheville's identity and its character in the future, how important, if at all, is each of the following dimensions?	Length of residency in Asheville		Rent or own home		Annual household income		Age				
	Less than 5 years	6 to 20 years	Rent	Own	Less than \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 or more	18-34	35-54	55+	
A place to work	80%	79%	81%	79%	81%	84%	76%	80%	82%	81%	78%
A place to shop	64%	68%	67%	65%	69%	63%	62%	73%	66%	66%	66%
A place to live	70%	67%	62%	71%	60%	73%	57%	68%	67%	66%	65%
A place for entertainment and community events	83%	79%	72%	81%	74%	70%	80%	81%	86%	77%	71%
A place where social services are available	66%	67%	69%	73%	60%	80%	66%	56%	72%	60%	70%
A place to worship	34%	41%	63%	48%	45%	61%	41%	37%	23%	51%	63%
A place with a variety of good transportation options	83%	85%	76%	83%	78%	90%	77%	78%	85%	77%	81%